

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election of invention III (claims 7 and 16) in Paper No. 9, filed 02/08/2008 is acknowledged.

**EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Robert Popa on 2/28/2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17 are cancelled

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 7 and 16 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: While Befu et al. (US 7, 068, 83) teaches an image processing method comprising a step of extracting images, different in depth, of a 3-D object over different angles, a binarizing step of deleting the portion of a gray level range that has very few object components out of the images obtained by the extracting step, re-mapping the other portions into a specified gray level range, and binarizing the resultant portions, and a step of building the 3-D image of the 3-D object based on the images binarized by the binarizing step. Keisuke et al (JP 2003061956) teaches image processing method capable

of developing a three-dimensional image of high quality with a less amount of data than before, by adding cumulative intensity. None teaches calculating the integrated value of a predetermined number of 3-dimensional CT data elements which are consecutive with a currently observed 3-dimensional CT data element being set as a starting point, for each of a plurality of directions with the currently observed 3-dimensional CT data element being set as a starting point; and adding a predetermined number of upper-rank integrated values among respective integrated values calculated for the plurality of directions in the integrated value calculating step and a sum of a predetermined number of lower-rank integrated values among the respective integrated values calculated for the plurality of directions in the integrated value calculating step; and comparing the sum of the integrated values to a prescribed threshold value and then subjecting the specified set of three-dimensional CT data to data processing in cases when the sum of the integrated value is greater than the threshold value. The Examiner finds no reason or motivation to combine the above references in an obviousness rejection thus placing the application in condition for allowance.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to NANCY BITAR whose telephone number is (571)270-1041. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (7:30a.m. to 5:00pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bhavesh Mehta can be reached on 571-272-7453. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Nancy Bitar

3/5/2008

/Andrew W. Johns/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2624